



**Date:** January 22, 2013

**To:** Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager  
**Through:** Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager  
**From:** Mark D. Ahrendsen, Transportation Director  
Harmon E. Crutchfield, Assistant Transportation Director  
Pierre Osei-Owusu, Sr., Transportation Planner

**Subject:** Grant Project Ordinance Receiving Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funds for the Bull City Connector

### **Executive Summary**

The City has been operating the Bull City Connector service since August of 2010. The free service links Duke University/Hospital, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Downtown, and Golden Belt with the Durham urban core as well as the Durham Station connecting employment, education, entertainment/retail, and residential activities along the entire service corridor. The City of Durham has secured an additional year of federal assistance through Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds in the amount of \$800,000, providing operating assistance for the Bull City Connector for FY 2013.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that City Council adopt the FTA 5307 CMAQ Grant Project Ordinance for the funds needed to operate the Bull City Connector and authorize the City Manager to receive the federal grant.

### **Background**

The City has been operating the Bull City Connector service since August of 2010. The free service links Duke University/Hospital, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Downtown, and Golden Belt with the Durham urban core as well as the Durham Station connecting employment, education, entertainment/retail, and residential activities along the entire service corridor.

In 2009, the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC-MPO), Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) approved a total of \$1,949,755 in Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for DATA as operating assistance to fund a new Southpoint-to-Duke Commuter bus route. As part of the Designing Better Bus Service adopted in June 2012, peak hour commuter bus from Southpoint to Duke coupled with peak hour commuter bus service from Duke Regional Hospital area replaced the originally planned Southpoint to Duke bus route with the implementation date moved from FY 2013 to FY 2014. The new service is now estimated to cost \$800,000 less in federal assistance. The City of Durham subsequently requested and received approval from the TAC and NCDOT for the balance of \$800,000 to fund a third year of federal operating assistance for the Bull City connector service (see attachments). The Bull City Connector has already received CMAQ funding for capital and operating for two years (FY 2011 and FY 2012).

**Issues/Analysis**

The Bull City Connector is designed as a fast, frequent, and free service for all Durham residents and visitors who might have the need or desire to travel within the urban corridor service area. It is undoubtedly a complimentary addition to the City's existing transit service. In addition, an Agreement between the City and Duke University is currently in place that represents a public-private partnership that enables the City to leverage federal dollars with matching contributions coming from a private partner. Two CMAQ grants have already been obtained for the Bull City Connector. One grant was for the purchase of five buses with perimeter seating that are currently used on the Connector service. The second is an operating assistance grant, partially offsetting the operating cost of the service. This grant has been used for the first two years of operation and there is now the opportunity for the City of Durham to apply for a third year of this operating assistance grant. Failure to authorize the City Manager to receive this grant will result in forfeiture of these federal dollars.

**Alternatives**

City Council adopts the attached Grant Project Ordinance for the funds needed to operate the Bull City Connector and authorizes the City Manager to receive the federal funds to partially offset the cost of operation of the service.

City Council does not adopt the attached Grant Project Ordinance, in which case the approved federal grant related to the project will not be received.

**Financial Impact**

The operation of the Bull City Connector is currently being funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the City of Durham and Duke University. This is the last year that the federal operating assistance funds (CMAQ) would be available to support the service. The City's matching share in the amount of \$200,000 is already available in the FY13 Transit budget.

**SDBE Summary**

The City's transit program is a federally funded program. SDBE participation is not an issue that is associated with the recommended action.

**Attachments**

FTA 5307 CMAQ Grant and Authorization to Execute Grant Agreement

Memo from North Carolina Department of Transportation (NDCOT) dated September 12, 2012 requesting CMAQ funds transfer

Memo from Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) dated May 9, 2012 regarding FY 2013-15 CMAQ changes